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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS: QUESTIONS RELATING TO REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-seventh year

Letter dated 11 February 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach herewith a letter dated 11 February 1992 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Baccus Matthews, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Interim Government of National Unity of the Republic of Liberia (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under the items entitled "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions: Questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons" and "Human rights questions: Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) William BULL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 11 February 1992 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to present my compliments and to inform you of the efforts the people of Liberia are exerting to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections as the culminating signpost to peace and a return to democracy.

As you are aware, Liberia has been seriously affected by a tragic civil conflict, which has wrecked the foundation of the country. Through the laudable efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the support of the United Nations, a cease-fire has been in effect for a little over a year and security in the capital is being maintained by the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

I am pleased to inform you that, in a spirit of reconciliation, Liberians have reached a national consensus to hold free and fair elections, under international supervision, as a strategy for settling the Liberian conflict. As a manifestation of our commitment, we have held consultative meetings among ourselves and have established a five-member Elections Commission.

We have also succeeded in securing the assistance of the International Negotiations Network, headed by former President Jimmy Carter, to work out electoral modalities with the Elections Commission and help in the supervision and monitoring of the elections.

The elections will be held in accordance with the ECOWAS Peace Plan of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee, which was approved by the Authority of the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government and endorsed by Liberians at the National Conference in March 1991.

A necessary precondition for the holding of the elections is the creation of adequate security arrangements throughout the country. In this regard, it is encouraging to note that ECOMOG has begun to take up positions throughout the country to enhance the encampment and disarming process pursuant to the Agreement reached at the Fourth Meeting of the ECOWAS Committee of Five which convened in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, on 29 October 1991.

Although progress is being made with respect to security arrangements, Liberia is just emerging from the throes of a traumatic experience and therefore lacks the requisite resources to concurrently respond to repatriation demands and the financing of the elections. As time is of the essence, it is important that progress is equally made in complementary areas.

In this connection, I wish to request, on behalf of Liberia, that the United Nations provide assistance in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/147 of 17 December 1991 which, inter alia, "calls upon the international community and intergovernmental and non-governmental

organizations to provide Liberia with technical, financial and material assistance for the repatriation and resettlement of Liberian refugees, returnees and displaced persons and for the rehabilitation of combatants and their families, as provided for in the national plans, which constitute important elements for facilitating the holding of democratic elections in Liberia."

It is further requested that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/137 of 17 December 1991, the United Nations provide financial and technical assistance to help the Elections Commission prepare for and conduct the forthcoming elections. In addition, we request that United Nations observers be sent to Liberia to follow the electoral process.

These two requests are consistent with existing resolutions and accords of both the OAU and ECOWAS, particularly the Yamoussoukro IV Agreement, referred to above.

Liberians share the high expectations that the United Nations will manifest much deserved support for the ECOWAS Peace Plan in a substantial way, as was envisaged in the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 22 January 1991 on this matter (S/22133).

I wish to reaffirm the unwavering commitment of the people of Liberia to democratic pluralism, which embodies the holding of free and fair elections as a basis for political stability and social progress. It is our abiding belief that the involvement of the United Nations in the electoral process will lend credibility to the results.

(Signed) Gabriel Baccus MATTHEWS
Minister